(c) According to the latest figures available from United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), there were about 7.59 million international tourist arrivals in Singapore in 2006 as compared to 4.45 million foreign tourist arrivals in India.

(d) India has been achieving consistently a high growth rate of 13.3%, 13.5% and 12.4% in foreign tourist arrivals in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively. Some of the important steps being taken to attract more foreign tourists in India include the integrated development of tourist infrastructure at tourist circuits and destinations, growth of hotel infrastructure particularly budget hotels, augmentation of air capacity, enhancing availability of skilled manpower, according greater focus in emerging markets particularly in the regions of China, North-East Asia and South-East Asia and international publicity campaigns through the electronic and print media, etc.

Development of tourist resort in Orissa

2465. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Orissa Government proposes to develop a tourist resort near the Dakhinapur reservoir, which would provide water sports, floating restaurants and picnic spots;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan of the Centre to help this State for effective execution of this project, to improve the economy of this region?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/ Union Territories themselves. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories for grant of Central financial assistance every year under the following schemes:

(i) Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits

(ii) Large Revenue Generating projects

(iii) Fairs and Festivals/Events

(iv) Information Technology

No proposal has been submitted by the Government of Orissa to Ministry of Tourism regarding development of a tourist resort near the Dakhinapur reservoir.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has sanctioned tourism projects to the tune of Rs. 7235.39 lakh and Rs. 2327.05 lakh for the State of Orissa in the Tenth Plan and in the year 2007-08 respectively.

Medical tourism

2466. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Medical Tourism is gaining ground in our country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith figures for the last two years; and

(c) the action taken to provide for public-private partnership in this area?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism does not collect separate information on medical tourist traffic to India. The steps taken by the Government to promote medical tourism include promotion in overseas market through brochure, CDs, films and other publicity material.

Inauguration of Travel and Tourism Fair

2467. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Travel and Tourism Fair—a supermarket of tourism products with 150 participants, including 11 State Governments and six countries, was inaugurated in Bangalore in the Month of January, 2008;

(a) if so, whether the fair has participation from partner country Nepal, Egypt, Malaysia, etc.;

(b) if so, to what extent this fair has helped the participated countries;

(c) to what extent this fair has helped the States to increase the inflow of tourists; and

(d) whether any concrete proposals were also discussed on how to improve the increase of tourists' traffic between these countries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) The purpose of participation in such fairs is to have a visible and effective presence, to create awareness about tourism products and eventually attract tourists to the participating States/countries. However, no estimates are made about the increase in inflow of tourists on account of participation in such fairs.

Foreign tourists visiting India

2468. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India ranked only 42nd in international tourist arrivals in 2006 with 4.4 million visitors according to the World Tourism Organisation, while the highest number of tourist arrivals were in France with 80 millions with first place and China with 50 million in the fourth place;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether inspite of better connectivity and the "Incredible India Campaign" the country failed to attract foreign tourists;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to improve the tourism sector?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) As per the figures released by United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the top 4 countries in the world in terms of international tourist arrivals in 2006 were as under: